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NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

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# bulletin

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FROM THE NLTA

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One of the priorities of your Association is to promote the teaching profession and the importance of public education. Looking through this issue of *The Bulletin*, we are highlighting members across the province who are promoting their profession through their dedication to education and their continued professionalism. From Prime Minister's Awards of Excellence to provincial government awards and recognition for members of our Special Interest Councils, NLTA members are making a mark.



Please continue to share the good work happening in your classrooms, schools and communities – we want to hear about it! And if you have someone in your school that you feel the entire membership should get to know, tell us and they could be featured in an upcoming *An Interview With...* feature.

Take care,  
Jennifer

# THE bulletin

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# UP FRONT WITH THE NLTA PRESIDENT



*Morale is a state of mind. It is steadfastness and courage and hope.* ~ George C. Marshall

Colleagues/Friends,

Thank you for taking the time to read *The Bulletin* and to stay in tune with our ongoing representation and advocacy efforts. An ongoing responsibility of ours is to keep you informed of your Association's activities as we address with the policy-maker the issues you are experiencing on the frontlines. *The Bulletin* is one way of achieving that.

Though you have all made individual and group efforts to stabilize the learning environments for yourselves and your students (and I commend you for that), it has been an undoubtedly heavy start to the 2022-23 school year. Unfilled teaching positions, SmartFind uncertainties, and the substitute teacher shortage (just to name a few) have added to the ongoing complexities of class size, composition, and workload. Our staff have worked diligently to bring your individual concerns forward with school district personnel, seeking prompt responses and resolutions. We have availed of media coverage and meetings with Government to press on the global issues of teacher allocation, recruitment and retention, and staff shortages. Our media presence can be viewed on the NLTA website at the following link: [www.nlta.ca/nltapresident-trentlangdon-2/](http://www.nlta.ca/nltapresident-trentlangdon-2/).

As a means of update on significant items for us at the current time:

**Teacher Payroll** – We have seen some reduction in the problems being experienced. There is no excuse for payroll delays on the part of Government; we have availed of media coverage to assist with pushing this issue and will advocate on your behalf 'as needed' moving forward.

**Recruitment, Retention, & Resources** – In a recent news release (November 21, 2022), we renewed our call to the Provincial Government to "implement a comprehensive strategy in response to the short and

long-term challenges with recruitment and retention of certified teachers in this province." Subsequently, several media opportunities emerged giving us opportunities to keep these issues in the forefront.

**Collective Bargaining** – Your Negotiating Team, consisting of frontline teachers and administrators, Provincial Executive members, and NLTA staff have exchanged opening proposals with the employer and you would have had the opportunity by now to avail of information sessions related to the same. The membership will be kept informed as things progress through our 'Bargaining Brief' memos.

**Branch Leadership Seminars** – Seminars were held in Deer Lake, Plum Point, and Clarenville during three weekends this fall as we continue efforts to train branch leaders within their respective roles as valuable volunteers on the ground. Thank you to all who attended and we encourage members to consider putting themselves forward for branch-level executive positions as they arise.

**Independent Review of the Teacher Allocation Model** – *Learning in a Time of Change* (Report of the Teacher Allocation Review Committee) was released earlier this fall. Your Association initially commented on the report; however, the recommendations within were extensive and we continue to analyze the details along with the associated implications of each. With time, there will be further commentary on this report.

**2023 NLTA BGM** – A reminder once again that NLTA BGM 2023 will be held this coming spring from April 11-14 in St. John's. This is a primary decision-making event for the Association with our elected leaders from all levels coming to the table to represent your interests.

**SmartFind System** – This has been one of our largest files this year. We have advocated strongly and loudly with NLESD to

make the necessary changes to the system that will increase consistency for schools and give our members stability within the hiring process. In addition to submissions by the NLTA and open communications, there have been Government consultations with administrators and teachers seeking clarity on the impacts of this system on our schools and educators. Solution-focused advocacy is continuing.

**Council of Atlantic Provinces & Territorial Teaching Organizations (CAPTTO) & Canadian Teachers' Federation (CTF-FCE)** – We have been represented at the board tables of these two prominent groups for some time and the work has continued this year with meetings being held in Halifax and Ottawa respectively. A highly valuable opportunity to network with our affiliate groups, gauge emerging trends, and build collective responses to ongoing pressures.

I truly believe our collective efforts have served us well and we are stronger each day as a result. This is only achieved when we are able to hear your individual thoughts and concerns and strategize accordingly. I see great value in visiting you in your staff rooms and will continue making every effort to do so. Please continue to make your perspectives known as our knowledge of the frontlines is our greatest asset.

Morale does not come easily, nor naturally. Respect is felt when the employer and policymakers identify public education as an essential and developmental service that requires financial investment, is rooted in long-term objectives, and addresses the needs of the people on the ground. This, combined with our own steadfastness and self-advocacy, will lead to improved morale within our ranks.

Yours in Solidarity,

# NLTA Holiday Art Contest

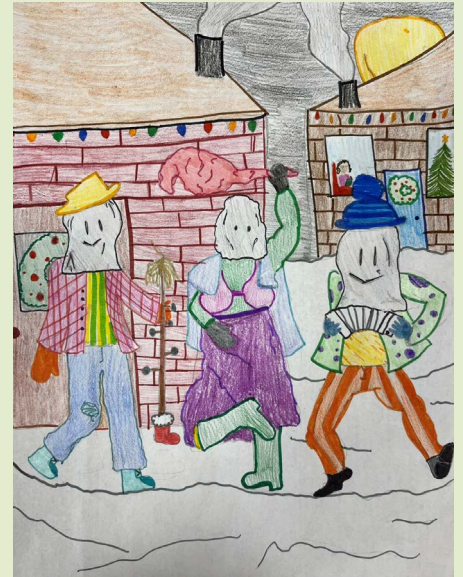
We received over 500 entries from students in Kindergarten to Grade 12 for the NLTA Holiday Art Contest. We asked students to tell us what this season means to them and the creativity of the entries was wonderful! A huge thank you to all members who encouraged their students to participate. The cover image was designed by **Anna Rideout, a Grade 9 student** of Janice Slaney at **Pearce Junior High** in Marystown. Below are honourable mentions. The students featured in *The Bulletin* will win a prize.



McKenzie Bernard, Grade 3, Belanger Memorial School, Doyles  
(Teacher: Melissa Muise)



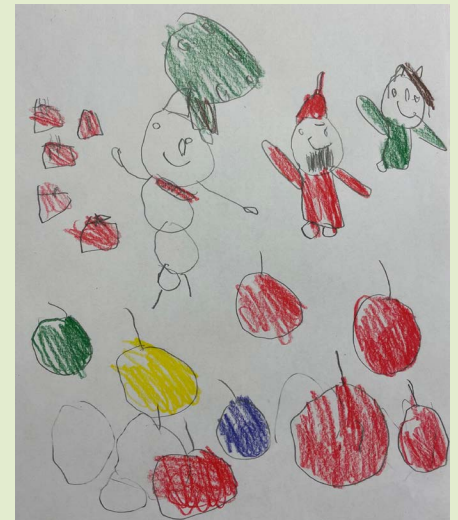
Allyson Penney, Grade 6, St. Matthew's School, St. John's  
(Teacher: Stuart MacGillvray)



Maria Barney, Grade 7, Labrador Straits Academy, L'Anse au Loup  
(Teacher: Amanda Anthony-Chubbs)



Chloe Strong, Grade 12, Clarendville High School, Clarendville  
(Teacher: Michelle King)



Maxine Butt, Life Skills Student, Carbonear Collegiate  
(Teacher: Danielle Doyle)



## NEWFOUNDLAND &amp; LABRADOR

## Kids Eat Smart Radiothon

The NLTA, a proud sponsor of the Kids Eat Smart Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador, participated in the recent KES Radiothon on November 3, 2022. President Trent Langdon was joined by Vice-President Maureen Doyle-Gillingham and Table Officers Kelly Loch and Sean Weir. The Association donated \$5,000 to KES. A total of \$342,794.58 was raised during the radiothon, which will provide 342,794 breakfasts to school-age children in NL at no cost to families.



L-R: Sean Weir, Maureen Doyle-Gillingham, Trent Langdon, Kelly Loch

## CANADA

HeartSmart Kids™  
Free Resources for K-6 Students

Are you interested in a **FREE** health literacy resource for students in K-6? Heart & Stroke's HeartSmartKids™ (HSK) workbooks are now available to order for the 2022-23 school year.

HSK is a set of three workbooks that educators can order (free of charge) year after year for K-6 students. The goal of the resource is to focus on **health literacy** via exploring nine different units/themes (including healthy eating and physical activity); all of which the educator can tailor to suit their group needs and curriculum.

Sign up for the free online training now to order your free colourful workbooks for every student in your classroom/youth group.

For more information visit [www.hskids.ca](http://www.hskids.ca). Please use the website contact form if you have any questions.

## Breakfast Clubs Are a Go!

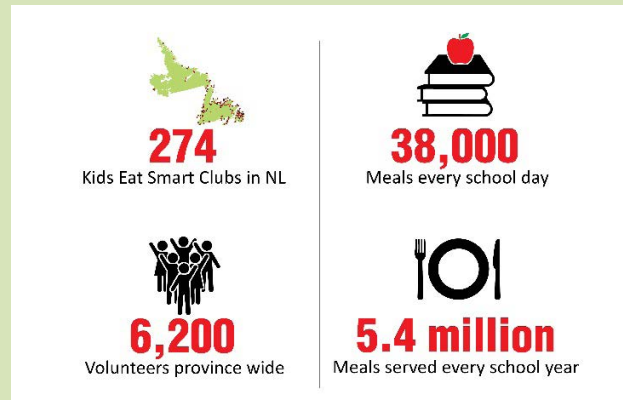
### Every Breakfast. Every Child. Every School Day

We are happy to share with you that our breakfast clubs are a go and it is through your continued support that our school-age children have access to food at school every day, at no cost to families.



Our breakfast clubs are back serving a combination of both sit down and grab and go models and it is so wonderful to see our children and school communities finally coming back to having breakfast together.

We know that 1 in 4 children under the age of 18 in our province live in food insecure homes, and that is why our Kids Eat Smart Clubs are so important. Serving over 38,000+ meals every school day would not be possible without your support.



During this school year, we look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that our children start their school days well-nourished and ready to learn.

If you would like more information, visit our website at [www.kidseatsmart.ca](http://www.kidseatsmart.ca) or contact Celina Stoyles, Executive Director, directly at (877) 722-1996 or email [cstoyles@kidseatsmart.ca](mailto:cstoyles@kidseatsmart.ca).



# Kids Eat Smart Foundation

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR



# New Arbitration Ruling Protection from Online Abuse and Harassment

by Miriam Sheppard

**Note:** For privacy reasons, some parties are not identified, and some details are omitted.

On August 15, 2022, your Association received the most recent ruling regarding a grievance that the Association referred to arbitration. This grievance considered the employer response to the social media abuse of a teacher who, at the time of the abuse, was the subject of a police investigation. Your Association took the position that the employer had failed to adequately respond to abusive online commentary by third parties, including parents, about the grievor. Some of the social media posters published abusive comments about the teacher, and others posted the teacher's name and photograph and identified the teacher's spouse. The abuse happened on more than one Facebook site. The teacher and their spouse and family lived and worked in a small community. The Employer's response was to report the abusive conduct to Facebook. The Association maintained that more should have been done. The Employer cited concerns with interfering with a police investigation.

Clause 29.07 of the Provincial Collective Agreement [Clause 17.07 in Labrador West] provides: *The School Boards shall, prior to the expiration of this agreement undertake a review of and/or develop **and implement** policies regarding school violence and dealing with students and parents who have exhibited violent and abusive behaviour. In reviewing and/or developing these policies, the School Boards will seek input from the Association, school administrators and other personnel who are deemed to have a legitimate role in prevention, intervention, and assessment activities. [Emphasis added]*

Clause 58.01 [Clause 59.01 in Labrador West] states: *The Boards and the Association recognize the right of all teachers to work in an environment free from harassment and shall work together to ensure that harassment is actively discouraged. All reported incidents of harassment shall be thoroughly investigated as quickly and as*

*confidentially as possible. **The Employer agrees to take reasonable steps to ensure that the harassment stops and that individuals who engage in such behaviour are dealt with appropriately and/or disciplined.** The Employer and the Association agree that the victims of harassment shall be supported, and protected, where possible, from the repercussions which may result from a complaint. [Emphasis added]*

There was also a Memorandum of Settlement (MOS) applicable in this case, which arose out of prior grievances filed by two teachers who were also being harassed online by third parties – in that case, a parent. Those grievances were settled by the MOS. Among other things, the District agreed in the MOS that:

- (a) violence is not a necessary precondition to a finding of abuse under the Policy HR-811;
- (b) an appropriate response to a violation of the Policy is a timely response; and that the District agrees to make every effort to respond within two (2) working days for first District contact with a complainant;
- (c) specific and detailed communications with targeted employees, with regard to steps taken by the District in furtherance of Policy objectives is an important part of demonstrating “support” for employees in providing a harassment and abuse free workplace;
- (d) abuse under the Policy includes, but is not limited to, a public attack by an employee of NLESD, parent/guardian, student or volunteer that threatens the livelihood or professional reputation of employees; [Emphasis added]
- (e) the District will make every effort to take available steps (i.e., make a request to site administrators) to have offending communications removed from public access;
- (f) the District will commit to written correspondence and, when possible, in person meetings with complainants when confronted with communications that run afoul of the Policy HR-811.

Such communications must identify the inappropriateness of the abusive behaviour and draw relevant policy to the recipient's attention, with a copy to be provided to the Union in cases where the union is representing the teacher.

(g) this is a baseline, not a complete protocol, and other steps may be required depending on the circumstances of a particular case.

The employer and your Association agreed that the online statements about the teacher constituted online harassment as well as abuse. The majority of the arbitration panel also found as a fact that the posts were harassing and abusive. It also found that the MOS applied, and that its requirements had not been met. District staff testified in this regard that they were reluctant to intervene because the teacher was under police investigation and they were concerned about undermining or interfering with a police investigation. The majority of the arbitration panel did not accept this rationale. The majority recognized that the employer was trying to protect the ongoing police investigation by "standing down" i.e., by holding its own investigation in abeyance until such time as the police completed their investigation. However, the majority found that the employer did not specifically show how following the MOS would interfere with the police investigation. The majority also found that the District has a legal obligation to protect students, but that this had been accomplished by putting the teacher on leave while the investigation was going on. Simply put, "By putting the teacher on leave, the district protects the student. By telling the Third Party parent that their online abuse is not tolerated in accordance with District policies, the District would show support for all teachers without harming the student."

As remedy, the majority awarded \$2,500 to the grievor in general damages for mental distress and anguish. The majority also declared that the MOS applied to all cases of third party harassment and abuse as defined in the MOS, and that the employer had breached the collective agreement, MOS and policy to take reasonable steps to ensure that the harassment stopped and that individuals who engaged in such behavior were dealt with appropriately. This is an important arbitration as it reinforces the employer's obligation to react to social media abuse of teachers, and support teachers who are victims of harassment and abuse.

Teachers with questions should contact an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services.

*Miriam Sheppard is an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA, msheppard@nlta.ca.*

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# Are You Thinking About Retiring?

## INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

**U**nder the *Teachers' Pensions Act*, a teacher is eligible for pension benefit:

- (a) At age 60, with at least five years of pensionable service. **Note:** teachers who retire **prior to age 60** with between 5 and 24 years of pensionable service will not be eligible for a pension until the month following their 62nd birthday.
- (b) At age 55 or after, with at least 25 years of pensionable service.
- (c) After completing 30 years of worked service\* (or 29.5 years by June), regardless of age.
- (d) After completing 29 years of worked service (or 28.5 years by June) and at least 30 years of pensionable service. Pension will be reduced based on the number of months a teacher will be retired prior to reaching age 55. Reduction ceases after age 55.
- (e) At age 55, with between 5 and 24.4 years of pension service, an actuarially reduced pension can be payable.

(\*worked service refers to all pensionable service, except university study buy-back that was purchased prior to 1991.)

Regardless of which retirement eligibility trigger applies, **pension is only payable in the month following resignation and application for a pension.** For example, a teacher who retires effective June 30 and a teacher who retires effective June 5 will both be eligible to start receiving a pension in July. This holds true no matter when or in which month a teacher chooses to retire.

### Access to Pension Estimator

Teachers have access to a pension estimator through the Member Self Service Portal on the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation website at [www.tppcnl.ca](http://www.tppcnl.ca).

### Checklist for Retiring Teachers

The following checklist is designed to assist teachers as they participate and plan for this upcoming life phase change.

- Apply to the NLTA to attend a pre-retirement seminar up to two years prior to your year of retirement;
- Confirm the eligible date of your retirement with the TPPC at the pre-retirement seminar or by contacting the TPPC directly at [memberservices@tppcnl.ca](mailto:memberservices@tppcnl.ca).
- Submit your resignation to the School Board (**do not** resign until eligibility has been confirmed): one month notice is required if retirement is to occur anytime prior to Christmas; three months notice (March 31 if retiring June 30) is required if retirement is to occur after Christmas. If you are retiring at the end of the school year, it's imperative

that you submit your resignation and paperwork before the end of June. Otherwise, you will not be eligible for your pension until at least **August 1**. Applications can no longer be backdated. This is a Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) regulation.

- Apply for pension by completing and submitting the appropriate "Teachers' Pension" application and "Direct Deposit" form prior to the effective date of your resignation.
- Apply for severance pay (if applicable) by completing the "Severance Payment Request" form.
- Most of your current Group Insurance benefits will automatically continue through deductions on your pension cheques. Long Term Disability and the \$10,000 Basic Critical Illness benefit, however, will terminate at retirement. Your current Basic Group Life and Accident Insurance coverage of two times annual earnings will reduce to two times annual pension. If you would like to convert your Group Life Insurance coverage that is being lost (reduced) to an individual Life Insurance program, make certain to contact Johnson Inc. to arrange to do so within 31 days of retirement/reduction of coverage to avoid the necessity of a medical application/underwriting. For further details please consult the Group Insurance website at [groupinsurance.nlta.ca](http://groupinsurance.nlta.ca) or contact Johnson Inc. at 1-800-563-1528.
- Consider joining the Retired Teachers' Association by completing the application form at [www.nlta.ca/rtanl-membership-application/](http://www.nlta.ca/rtanl-membership-application/).
- Consider seeking personal financial advice regarding financial decisions related to retirement.
- Keep your mind active and your body healthy. Enjoy life!

### Changes Effective Upon Retirement

- NLTA Membership status changes from Active Membership to Life or Associate Membership.
- Access to the services and benefits of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) terminates.
- Basic Life Insurance coverage reduces to twice annual pension from twice annual salary (provided coverage is maintained and premiums paid); coverage terminates at age 65 and is replaced by a members only \$15,000 benefit after age 65.
- Basic Critical Illness Insurance terminates.
- Eligibility for EI ceases (unless a person becomes a "re-established worker" or is on a forced medical retirement).

*Any questions or comments can be directed to Deana Hatcher, Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA at [dhatcher@nlta.ca](mailto:dhatcher@nlta.ca), Tel: 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 270.*



# GOING ON LEAVE? THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Whether going on maternity leave, approved leave without pay, unpaid sick leave, educational leave, or deferred salary leave, it is your responsibility to ensure your desired benefits are maintained while on leave. NLTA members should be aware of the steps which must be taken to maintain these benefits which include NLTA Membership, Group Insurance and Pension service. As well, we are often asked about the impact of such leaves with respect to seniority, pension and salary increments. The table below will assist members in addressing these questions.

## NLTA Membership

**N1:** Payment of \$5.00 per month must be made to the NLTA to maintain membership rights and benefits as per NLTA policy. To discuss payment options, please contact Rita Tee, NLTA Corporate Services, rtee@nlta.ca; 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599, ext. 236.

**N2:** Membership dues continue to be paid as normal via deduction from paid salary.

**N3:** Dues not required in order to maintain membership.

## Group Insurance

**G1:** NLTA members must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay their share of the group insurance premiums. Failure to do so will result in termination of insurance. If insurance is terminated, the member will be required to apply for coverage and provide proof of medical insurability, subject to policy limitations, should the member wish to resume coverage. **Should a member take more than 52 calendar weeks of maternity/adoption/parental leave, they must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay by bank deduction both their share and government's share of the group insurance premiums for the additional leave period.** Otherwise, if insurance is allowed to lapse during a period of parenthood leave, medical proof of insurability may be required in order to be reinstated in the plan. As well, members must contact Johnson Inc. within 31 days of the child's birth/adoption in order to add a dependent for group insurance coverage. Beyond 31 days, an application providing satisfactory medical evidence of insurability will be necessary and approval must be granted by the underwriters.

**G2:** NLTA members must arrange with Johnson Inc. to pay by bank deduction both their share and the government's share (Life, Accidental Death and Dismemberment, and Health plans only) of the group insurance premiums. Failure to do so will result in termination of insurance. If insurance is terminated, the member will be required to apply for coverage and provide proof of medical insurability, subject to policy limitations, should the member wish to resume coverage.

**G3:** Payment of group insurance premiums continue to be paid via normal payroll deduction and government's contribution of their share continues.

## Pension

**P1:** Pension premium is unpaid and no pension service accrues while on leave. Members may arrange with the Teachers' Pension Plan Corporation (TPPC) to purchase lost pension service. Members must make their election (accept a contract to purchase service) within 180 days from their return to work. If the service time is purchased within this window, the cost is at current contribution rates matched by government. After 180 days, the cost is at full actuarial value, which is a significant cost increase.

**P2:** Pension premium continues to be paid on the full salary, not the reduced salary, and full pension service accrues.

## Salary Increments

Members' placement on the salary grid is reviewed and changes are made once per year at the beginning of the school year or at the date of initial employment of a member. To determine the number of teaching years for salary increments, all teaching days to the date of calculation are added together and this total is divided by 195, which is the number of days in a school year. A fraction of half a year or more is required to move to the next step on the salary grid.

**S1:** Credited fully as time taught for the period of leave (maximum 58.5 continuous weeks for maternity/adoption/parental purposes) for the purpose of salary increments.

**S2:** Most unpaid leave is not credited for salary incremental purposes; however, it is credited fully as time taught when leave is related to upgrading experience and/or qualifications (approved unpaid educational leave).

**S3:** Not credited for the purpose of salary increments.

## Seniority

Seniority is determined on the basis of the total length of time employed as a member with any school board in the province, schools operated by the Department of Education, schools in Churchill Falls, and schools in Conne River.

**SE1:** Credited fully as time taught for the period of leave (maximum 58.5 continuous weeks for maternity/adoption/parental purposes) for the purpose of seniority.

**SE2:** Approved unpaid leave exceeding 10 days is not credited for the purpose of seniority.

Inquiries regarding specific circumstances should be directed to an Administrative Officer in Programs and Services at the NLTA at 726-3223 or 1-800-563-3599 or via email at mail@nlta.ca.

Type of Leave	NLTA Membership	Group Insurance	Pension	Salary Increments	Seniority
Maternity/Adoption/Parental Leave	N1	G1	P1	S1	SE1
Approved Unpaid Leave	N1	G2	P1	S3	SE2
Approved Unpaid Sick Leave	N3	G2	P1	S3	SE1
Paid Educational Leave	N2	G3	P2	S1	SE1
Approved Unpaid Educational Leave	N1	G2	P1	S2	SE1
Deferred Salary Leave	N2	G3	P2	S1	SE1
Injury on Duty (Temporary Earnings Loss)	N3	G3	P2	S2	SE1
Leave to Care for Critically Ill Child/ Family Member or Injured Child	N1	G2	P1	S3	SE1



# Is My Anxiety Normal?

by Kathy Taylor-Rogers

In my experience working in the field of Employee Assistance – Anxiety is among the most common mental health issues that employees seek assistance to gain control over. Anxiety is talked about in ever-increasing rates and most people will question at some point whether they have a “normal” amount of anxiety or not. For the most part, anxiety is very normal, and most people experience it from time to time.

Some situations where it would be normal to experience anxiety are prior to a job interview; before a big presentation; when writing an exam; when a deadline is looming for a project that is not finished; when meeting new people; in a new social experience and when you have to perform a task that is unfamiliar. Any teacher who is given a new work assignment to teach a subject that they do not feel overly comfortable with will likely experience anxiety. Some teachers, particularly when they are new to teaching, will experience anxiety when parent teacher meetings are planned. Some may experience anxiety when going to teach in a new school for the first time. We often experience anxiety in a situation where any degree of conflict might be expected.

Anxiety is essential to our survival and is our natural “flight or fight” response that protects us when we perceive a threat or danger. Historically it was developed as a protective mechanism and caused us to either fight the danger or flee from it. It can give us the push we need to prepare better for situations to increase our confidence and reduce the anxiety level.

It does take some reflection to determine whether our feelings of anxiety are typical or whether the anxiety has become so intense and constant that we need to seek help. When we reach a point where the anxiety is frequent, intense, prolonged, and causes frequent distress and interferes with our overall functioning on a regular basis then we do need to discuss it with our physician and likely need some professional help to learn how to manage it. Some of the most common physical symptoms of acute anxiety are heart pounding, shortness of breath, sweating, shaking, nausea, dizziness, chest pain or tightness, numbness or tingling sensations. Anxiety can also impact our thought processes in a negative way where it causes us to constantly expect or dread

that something bad will happen. It can also cause us to have a “brain block” where we are unable to think straight. Experiencing persistent and excessive worry could be a sign that you have Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). Those who suffer from GAD should seek assistance so they can learn strategies to control the anxiety. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy can be very helpful to assist those suffering from GAD to stop the worry cycle. GAD often starts gradually and there is some evidence that biological, family background, and life experiences can play a role. Anxiety can be related to childhood trauma or lack of feeling safe and loved as a child. It has been documented that people can start to believe that worry prevents bad things from happening, so they view giving up worrying as risky. Therefore, they often need counselling support to stop that worry cycle.

Often people who experience anxiety can be more prone to panic attacks. Panic attacks are sudden, unreasonable feelings of fear and very intense anxiety that can cause symptoms like racing heart, fast breathing and sweating. It can feel like you are having a heart attack. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, one third of adults will experience a panic attack at some time in their life.

Experts have not figured out why some people experience panic attacks but your risk increases if you have:

- Family history of Anxiety disorders
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse problems

Signs of a Panic Attack can include:

- Chest pain
- Chills
- Choking or smothering sensation
- Difficulty breathing
- Fear of losing control
- Feeling like you are going to die
- Intense feeling of terror
- Nausea
- Racing heart
- Sweating
- Tingling sensation

While all or some of these symptoms are common with panic attacks, they could also be indicative of

other serious health problems such as: heart attack, thyroid disease and respiratory illness. Hence, if you experience these symptoms you should go to see a health professional for an assessment.

There are several quick ways to relieve anxiety. Here are some more common ones that you may want to try:

- Remember to breathe – relax in a chair, sit up straight, take a deep long breath through your nose, hold it for 3-4 seconds and slowly exhale. Relax muscles in your face, jaw, shoulders, neck as you continue breathing, taking deep long breaths and holding them for 4-5 seconds.
- Take a mental step back – make a conscious effort to focus on the moment and divert your thinking from worrying thoughts
- Follow the 3-3-3 rule: look around and name three things that you can see, then listen and notice three things that you can hear and move three body parts, i.e fingers, toes and head
- Physical Activity – any forms of activity is good. Walking, biking and hiking outdoors are exceptionally good because nature is included
- Music – music has been proven to lower heart rate and blood pressure and singing has also proven to release endorphins and oxytocin
- Meditate – lay down or sit comfortably, deep breathe and try to release any thoughts from your mind and just bring your attention to your breath
- Laughter – the act of laughing feels good and increases oxygen levels and helps with muscle relaxation
- Avoid stimulants like coffee and alcohol
- Question and challenge any thoughts that create worry

I'd like to examine that last concept a little more in depth as I think that it is very important. Often when we experience significant anxiety our thinking can become unrealistic, and we can see everything in a negative light. Understanding and learning ways to overcome anxiety is all about being present in your own body and mind. When we start becoming negative in our thinking, it becomes important to examine some of our thought processes and possibly do some journaling so we can identify what our negative "worrying" thought patterns are. We need to develop ways to challenge these thoughts so we can learn how to stop them and rewire our brain. Changing thoughts requires Thought Balancing. When we have a negative thought such as "I am terrible at my job", take a look at the argument to support this thought and then look at the argument against it. Hopefully this will help you balance the thought better and your balanced thought might be – "Work is very

stressful right now but I am good at what I do and will learn from the current challenges and get back on track."

Anxiety is a normal emotion that we all experience. It is important to do some critical self-reflection to determine whether our anxiety is normal or whether it might be disrupting our daily life. If it gets in the way of being content with your life, then it might be time to gain control of the anxiety instead of letting it control you. If you need help to learn strategies to be able to control your anxiety more effectively then contact your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and one of the EAP Coordinators will help find a therapist that will assist you in learning to manage your anxiety and change that negative thought cycle.

*Kathy Taylor-Rogers was a Coordinator with the Employee Assistance Program for Teachers until November 3, 2022. For confidential assistance contact Kenda Riggs (ext. 265), kriggs@nlta.ca or Lori Hewitt (ext. 242), lhewitt@nlta.ca.*

Resources for this article:

- Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)
- Cleveland Clinic.org
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- Anxietycanada.com

## Education Week 2023

March 13-17

### Better Together



More information will be forwarded to schools in the coming weeks.



# JOINT COUNCIL 2022

## Joint Council Meeting

Joint Council was held in St. John's from November 4-5. Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents gathered to discuss issues important to members throughout the province, including calling for action from the Provincial Government to address teacher recruitment, retention and resources. The message was clear – a comprehensive, consistent and coordinated approach is needed to alleviate the pressure that is building in the public education system.



Joint Council also discussed the NLTA Priorities for 2021-23 – Teacher Workload; Teacher Health and Wellness; Response and Advocacy on Government Initiatives (PERT, PTF, Teacher Allocation Model Review); Promoting the Profession; and, Member Services/Collective Bargaining. The following topics were also reviewed and discussed by Provincial Executive and Branch Presidents: substitute availability; SmartFind; Violent Incident Tracking Form; administrative workload; teacher burnout; sick leave.





# JOINT COUNCIL 2022

## Province-Wide Vote for NLTA Vice-President – Candidates' Forum

During the Joint Council Meeting, the Vice-Presidential Candidates' Forum took place. The candidates had an opportunity to address the members in the room and those joining virtually and answered questions submitted to the Electoral Committee by members.



Candidates for Vice-President for 2023-25 (l-r): Maureen Doyle-Gillingham; Dale Lambe; Kelly Loch; and Sean Weir.



Members of the Electoral Committee (l-r): Janice Hayward; Paula Smith (chair); and Brody Morrison.

## NLTA Vice-Presidential Election

Become more familiar with the candidates before the NLTA province-wide online vote for Vice-President, taking place **December 12-16, 2022**.

Candidates for Vice-President for 2023-25 are:

- **Maureen Doyle-Gillingham, Ochre Pit Cove**
- **Dale Lambe, St. John's**
- **Kelly Loch, Victoria**
- **Sean Weir, Port Hope Simpson**

For more information on each candidate, including video from the forum, visit [nlta.ca](http://nlta.ca).

Further information will be sent to all members with details of how to vote online.



**RECRUITMENT.  
RETENTION.  
RESOURCES.**



## *An Interview With...* NLCPA President Minnie-Anne Balan

**M**innie-Anne Balan is a School Counsellor at Holy Trinity High School in Torbay and has served as the President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association (NLCPA) since 2021. She joined the executive in 2019 and has held the positions of treasurer and vice president prior. In her role with one of the NLTA's Special Interest Councils, Minnie-Anne helps provide a voice for counsellors and psychologists and helps further their professional growth. Minnie-Anne has been an NLTA member for almost 20 years and holds a Masters Degree in Counselling Psychology. She initially taught in a K-12 school in Maple Ridge, B.C. Upon her return to NL she completed her M.Ed and completed her guidance internship at CNA and later volunteered at Booth Memorial. Her first counselling position was a replacement one at Roncalli High School and a year later as counsellor at St. Augustine's, Bell Island. She then accepted a position as Behavior Support Specialist with the prior ESDNL. She has since worked at St. Peter's Elementary, St. Peter's Primary and currently Holy Trinity High School.

As an introduction to the membership in her role as President of the NLCPA, Minnie-Anne answers a series of questions.

**Q.** What is your main priority as President of NLCPA?

**A.** As President, we have a constitution to follow which outlines our priorities. Over the past three years the main priorities of NLCPA have been to:

1) Act as an ear and voice for counsellors and psychologists in Newfoundland and Labrador in matters relating to training, certification, promotion of high standards of professional competency and improvement of counselling and psychological services for all stakeholders within the Newfoundland and Labrador public K-12 school system.

2) Promote, encourage and provide professional development for counsellors and psychologists in Newfoundland and Labrador. In the last two years, we provided intermediate to advanced level training in Cultivating Grief Sensitivity in Therapy and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy. We ensured our members were able to receive CE credits (continuing education credits) required as part of maintaining their registration or certification, depending on the role.

3) Act as a voice with the Teacher Allocation Committee highlighting the need for changes in ratio for school psychologists and counsellors, the need to update our standards of practice and share the challenges of rural and remote counsellors and psychologists.

4) Streamline our membership list and financial accounts so everything is electronic.

**Q.** The NLTA currently has 16 Special Interest Councils, offering a wide range of professional development opportunities to members. What value do Special Interest Councils bring to members and, in turn, the education system?

**A.** Special Interest Councils help to engage and connect us further as professionals in our chosen field. For example, if you're a member of the Gender and Sexual Diversity Council, you connect with and share the wonderful activities, as an example, that various schools around the province are implementing. Being a teacher has often been described as a lonely profession given so much of the work is independent of other adults. Joining SICs allow for further connections, which help us feel less alone and provide opportunities to celebrate and showcase some of the wonderful work we do in this profession. Being a member of our SIC, NLCPA, for example, provides access to our annual PL. Our school psychologists and counsellors annually avail of high-



level training which ensures our students have access to professionals that are current in their field and in therapies.

**Q.** The last several years have been challenging for members, from dealing with a global pandemic and the impacts in schools to the recruitment and retention issues being experienced throughout the province. How have your members, counsellors and psychologists, been dealing with these challenges both personally and professionally?

**A.** Professionally, our annual NLCPA conferences and AGMs have been reconfigured into a virtual model. When we have our yearly conferences, being in a room filled with like minded counsellors and psychologists feels like being home. It's a beautiful feeling connecting with like minded individuals who share the same passion for supporting the mental health of our students. We hope the virtual model (albeit a good one) is temporary and even though it hasn't stopped us in providing PL, we are optimistic in-person conferences will resume this year. We are crossing our fingers and currently exploring this.

Personally, our counsellors and psychologists have been bearing the weight of supporting the decline in students' mental health as a result of the isolation, anxiety and restrictions the pandemic brought. It has increased our members' rates of compassion fatigue and burnout exponentially. The concept of self-care has never been more necessary than the past three years.

**Q.** What do you consider your greatest achievement?

**A.** My greatest achievement would be raising my two handsome sons, Jacob and Cameron, while working full time as a school counsellor, building my private practice and running a household solo. I trained for and ran my first Tely 10 this year, which was a pretty big deal given I wasn't sure I'd even be able to finish it...The power of a positive mindset sure helped!

**Q.** What motivates you to work hard?

**A.** Honestly, my biggest motivation is the previous student's smile and genuine expression of relief or gratitude in some way. Being of service to students and their families really is like an exhausting gift

that brings many rewards. As a school counsellor the work is challenging and overwhelming at times. Other times it's filled with laughter, tears or that deep heartfelt sense you're truly making a difference in a young person's life.

**Q.** Which historical figure do you most identify with?

**A.** Humanitarian and actress Audrey Hepburn, hands down. For me, she was the epitome of elegance, poise and authenticity. I've admired how she was involved with organizations like Unicef, all while following her passion to act and be a mother. She survived World War II, having to eat tulips at times for food. She didn't live a perfect life and had her share of challenges, but she always persevered. Her famous phrase "Happy Girls are the Prettiest" has always been my personal mantra. When we look after ourselves internally, we glow externally. That helps us to be much kinder to ourselves and others.

**Q.** What do you like to do in your free time?

**A.** I love to walk, hike the East Coast Trail, host quaint dinner parties or raclette nights with friends. Watching stand up comedy or playing board games with my sons, when they'll entertain me, are personal favorites. Now that they're 16 and 22, playing a quick game is kind of a hard sell, but I won't ever stop asking. I've grown up travelling so I do that whenever my bank account gives me the green light. I'm also in my element when I can pour a glass of wine, tell Alexa to play some music and find a new recipe to cook. My propane oven consistently transports me to a happy, content place. It's probably one of my favorite forms of self-care.

.....  
*If you would like to suggest someone in your school community that you think the entire membership should get to know a little more, send your suggestion to [jtulk@nlta.ca](mailto:jtulk@nlta.ca).*



## *Ceremony of Induction Into the Teaching Profession*

# Thoughts from a Faculty of Education Graduate

by Ashley Bishop

*The following is a speech given by Ashley Bishop, a recent graduate of the Faculty of Education at Memorial University, at the MUN Induction Ceremony into the Teaching Profession on June 3, 2022.*

Good morning and thank you to all special guests here today, including representatives of the NLTA, representatives from the Faculty of Education, and representatives from the Department of Education. Good morning and congratulations to all my fellow new teachers, and all the guests who have come to support us today. I am honoured to be here today to share some of the great things this program has done for me and for all of us.

I've grown a lot as a result of my journey from beginning my degree program to now standing here today. As a child, I was a very quiet and well-behaved student – never the type to speak up without being spoken to or to sit in the front in hopes of being called on. If you had told me as a child 15 years ago that I'd grow up to speak publicly every day for six hours a day as a living or that I'd be standing up here talking to a banquet room full of people, I would have laughed – and probably cried out of fear – in your face. Even as I graduated high school and decided to pursue this career, this was the thing that scared me the most. I was prepared for the work and was excited about what I would learn, but I was hoping my fears wouldn't hold me back because, at the time, I lacked confidence in what I would say and think. Although, with a welcoming community of professors and classmates, my confidence was built exponentially within the first few weeks. I was so lucky to have worked and grown with 21 of my lovely classmates who I will never forget. I thank you all deeply for being foundational supports in my learning and for being my MUN family for the past three years. I am so grateful for the life-long friendships I have made along the way. Having this environment helped me realize we are all in the same place and we are all learning, so any worry that I have

is most likely shared. Confidence in myself and my thoughts was the first gift that the Faculty had given me, and it allowed me to be open to reaching my full potential. By the end of it, all these worries we once had were distant memories, and they were replaced with feelings of validation and trust in ourselves.

I think one of the biggest contributing factors to developing our confidence as teachers was immersing us in the environment we should hope to create in our own classrooms; a community and family of learners where it is okay to make mistakes and laugh at yourself, where your emotions and your thoughts matter more than a number, and where it is encouraged and admirable to collaborate and ask for help. One of my favourite takeaways from these past years is that working as a team and knowing when to ask for help from others is a most valuable strength and tool, not a weakness. As children, we may have thought asking for help was a downfall. We might have thought it meant we didn't know enough. In my time at MUN in the Faculty of Education I realized that what it actually means is that when you are able to put yourself out there and ask for help it shows your ambition and willingness to grow and learn; to do what is best for the sake of progressing yourself and your mind.

Likewise, being able to help others and work as a team toward an assignment or discovering best practices together allowed us to practice helping our future colleagues while they also help us. I learned that it's important to avail of all the help you can get and give as much help as you can because we all followed this path with a common goal in mind. We care about children and want them all to have quality opportunities to learn, no matter their living situations, their ability level, or anything else. We want to grow minds that can change the world. That's a big task, and it takes a village. No one teacher can reach this goal alone. We are not in the business of teaching students that they need to know everything, so we should not expect that of ourselves. We are a work in progress as a society

and in an ever-changing world of knowledge, we must accept that, alone, we don't have all the answers and the solution is more often than not, about as clear as mud. For example, the most experienced of teachers were not taught how to teach over a computer just as we were not ready to attend class solely through a camera. But together, we keep up and do what needs to be done because this is not just a job, it's more than that. It's our collective passion project. Now with that said, I admit I had trouble adapting at first because I'd gone through life believing that having the correct answers as often as possible, as soon as possible is what led to success; that this is what your value is measured by as a learner. I always wanted questions to have one true answer and I wanted to know that answer right away, but this is not what I experienced as an Education student. And I'm so glad for it because if I couldn't let go of the value I held in being able to do it all the right way, all by myself, all the time I could never authentically teach my students to embrace their mistakes or see the value in learning together as a community instead of simply learning next to each other at the same time.

I think I speak for all of us graduates when I say that this deepened understanding of how we can learn by working together and finding our confidence has changed my perspective as a student, a teacher, and a person. I really hope we can do the same for our students as the Faculty of Education has done for us. I'm excited to see what our futures hold, but I sure will miss my time as an undergraduate student in the Primary/Elementary Education program. But something I recently heard is that "if something makes you sad when it ends, it must have been pretty wonderful when it was happening".

Thank you, and congratulations to all of my fellow brand new teachers!

*Ashley Bishop recently graduated with her Bachelor of Education in Primary/Elementary methods from Memorial University of Newfoundland. Since graduating, Ashley has been substituting at various schools in St. John's and surrounding areas. As a substitute teacher, Ashley has been able to continuously build upon her knowledge through reflecting on a variety experiences in a range of grades and classroom environments.*



## ***COPYRIGHT MATTERS!*** **A REFERENCE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS**

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Produced by the CMEC Copyright Consortium which is composed of the ministers of K-12 education of Canada's provinces and territories, with the exception of Quebec – [www.cmec.ca/copyrightinfo](http://www.cmec.ca/copyrightinfo).





## *Celebrating NL Teachers*

# 2022 Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence Winners

Three outstanding teachers from Newfoundland and Labrador have been honoured for their remarkable achievements in education by the Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence.



**Kimberly Phillips**

**Kimberly Phillips** from Cowan Heights Elementary in St. John's has been awarded a 2022 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence Certificate of Achievement. Kimberly is a school-based Reading Specialist, she teaches students from kindergarten to grade six the fundamentals of reading and reading instructions. She also is a primary leader in reading advocacy and professional learning for her colleagues at Cowan Heights Elementary.

Kimberly's innovative teaching practices are best expressed with the multitude and variety of activities designed to engage students and enrich the reading experience. She is keenly aware that learning to read should start at the earliest age – when the mind develops faster than at any other time in life. Among her projects is the Kinderstart initiative – a program for pre-kindergarten students where she hosts sessions that include the parents so they can be more involved in their children's learning. Kimberly is also a leader in introducing technology to the pursuit of reading abilities for her students.

Kimberly's accomplishments are the difference that she makes with individual students and their families. At Cowan Heights Elementary she has a responsibility and a mission that encompass much more than the simple acquisition of linguistic concepts. This is about bringing students to appreciate the immense benefits and pleasure of reading. The results of her work are impressive. Over the past year there has been a 40% increase in reading in the school's primary grades.

**Jeffrey Locke** from Holy Spirit High (HSH) School in Conception Bay South has been awarded a 2022 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in STEM Certificate of Achievement. Jeffrey teaches both science and creative writing.



**Jeffrey Locke**

Using constructivist methods, Jeffrey often delegates roles for students for particular tasks. In groups, he takes time to rotate leaders. He guides students to work as a team and experience new roles in the classroom. The outcome is greater ownership of learning and eventually, academic success.

Jeffrey incorporated Minecraft Education Edition into his writing class. He worked with teachers and students to create a Holy Spirit High School Minecraft world where students collaborated to represent their own understandings of descriptive text through the Minecraft world. Upon completion, Jeffrey was approached by Minecraft Education to share the project.

Much of the experimentation in Jeffrey's science classes is done using Vernier LabQuest Technology. He is committed to environmental conservation, science education, and community.

For six years Jeffrey has sponsored a video gaming club known as the HSH Smashteam. Students who may not have had much communication with other students were suddenly coming out of their shells in this environment. Jeffrey then extended this club into a fundraising event. Each year, the Smashteam organized a game-a-thon where students would participate in an all-night gaming session. They raised funds to donate tablets, ipads and technology for assisting student learning over six years for the Newfoundland Autism Society's educational library.

**Julia Grant-Pretty** from Holy Name of Mary Academy (HNMA) in Lawn has been awarded a 2022 Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence in STEM Certificate of Achievement. Julia teaches K-12 Math, Science, and Technology.

Julia's philosophy is based on the principle "learning is better together". She is a strong believer in giving students the opportunity to learn through exploration and to pursue their passions through inquiry-based learning. She believes technology is an extraordinary tool that enhances learning opportunities for her students.



**Julia Grant-Pretty**

Julia is dedicated to creating a welcoming classroom space which is safe, flexible, engaging, compassionate, and connected. To foster connection and build on her relationships with students, Julia introduces restorative talking circles to her classes. These circles support her students' socio-emotional development by building their interpersonal and communications skills.

Julia's teaching philosophy relies heavily on engaging students through STEM which brings real-world learning into her classroom through hands-on experiences that offer students self-directed learning activities and differentiated means of assessment.

Julia leads a highly successful robotics program. The HNMA Megabots have won multiple provincial competitions, and competed in a First Lego League international competition in Detroit, Michigan. The robotics team and program has been an incredible success within the school.

Julia lends her talents in the STEM field in more than just the classroom. She has become a Let's Talk Science Teacher Leader and mentors other teachers province wide.

Recipients of the award receive a certificate from the Prime Minister, promotion of their best teaching practices and national recognition for their contribution to excellence in education in Canada.

Nomination packages for the 2023 Prime Minister's Awards must be submitted to the Prime Minister's Awards program office by **January 17, 2023**. More information is available at [www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/pmate-ppmee.nsf/eng/home](http://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/pmate-ppmee.nsf/eng/home).

*(Information for this article was obtained from the Prime Minister's Awards program website.)*



**SHANNON DICKER**  
APPOINTED TO THE CTF  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON INDIGENOUS EDUCATION



**KELLY LOCH**  
APPOINTED TO THE CTF  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE  
TEACHING PROFESSION



## HATS OFF!

Have you recently won an award or know of a teacher who has been recognized for their contribution to the education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador? If so, we'd like to hear from you. Please send information on the award as well as a profile of the award winner(s) to:

**Jennifer Tulk**

Editor, *The Bulletin*

Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers' Association

[jtulk@nlta.ca](mailto:jtulk@nlta.ca)

# Premier Furey and Minister Haggie Present 2022 Teacher Awards

On November 8, 2022 Premier Andrew Furey and Education Minister John Haggie presented awards to the recipients of the 2022 Premier's Award for Teaching Innovation and the Minister of Education's Award for Compassion in Teaching.

The Premier's Award for Teaching Innovation recognizes primary, elementary or secondary teachers in all disciplines who have demonstrated innovation in instruction and a commitment to preparing their students for future success.

#### 2022 Premier's Award recipients:

- Christopher Butler, St. George's Elementary, Conception Bay South
- Megan Heath, École Rocher du Nord, St. John's
- Stephanie Hodder, C.C. Loughlin Elementary, Corner Brook
- Jeffrey Locke, Holy Spirit High, Conception Bay South
- Jim Locke, Mount Pearl Senior High, Mount Pearl
- Michelle Maracle, J.R. Smallwood Middle School, Wabush
- Whitney Pye, St. Mary's All Grade, Mary's Harbour
- Ashley Sheppard, C.C. Loughlin Elementary, Corner Brook

The Minister's Award for Compassion in Teaching recognizes inspirational and compassionate teachers at the primary, elementary or secondary level who have demonstrated an exceptional commitment to supporting the social, emotional and mental health of their students, colleagues or school community as a whole.

#### 2022 Minister of Education's Award recipients:

- Lora Dawn Angnatok, Jens Havens Memorial Primary, Nain
- Nancy Boutin, École Boréale, Happy Valley-Goose Bay
- Mark Bradbury, Templeton Academy, Meadows
- Paula Bradbury, Corner Brook Regional High, Corner Brook
- Meghan Devereaux, St. Matthew's School, St. John's
- Stephanie Gillis, Holy Heart of Mary High School, St. John's
- Holly Healey, Holy Cross Elementary, Holyrood
- Bernetta Hickey-Rideout, St. Joseph's All Grade, Terrenceville
- Donna Howse Windsor, Elizabeth Park Elementary, Paradise
- Dwayne Kilfoy, Donald C. Jamieson Academy, Burin

The Teaching Awards were established in 2021 to acknowledge the leadership role that all educators play in the lives of students.



Premier Andrew Furey and Minister John Haggie with the 2022 recipients of the Premier's Award for Teaching Innovation and the Minister of Education's Award for Compassion in Teaching. (Picture provided by Department of Education)



# Mental Health First Aid Training for Teachers

by AMANDA GAULTON

Mental health issues are on the rise worldwide. It is impacting our daily lives in school, in the community and unfortunately in our homes as well. Being able to assist when someone is experiencing a mental health problem could help ease the burden and make our classrooms a more productive space for us as teachers as well as a more supportive space for our students.

Mental health first aid is a training program offered by the Mental Health Commission of Canada that can provide teachers with the practical skills necessary to deal with mental health issues that arise in the classroom, in the staffroom and in our personal lives, including issues that one may be experiencing themselves. It allows individuals to respond to a mental health crisis until it is resolved just the same as first aid is administered to an injured person until medical treatment can be delivered by a professional.

Mental health first aid training is available to anyone over the age of 18 across Canada. More than 500,000 Canadians have been trained since 2007 in mental health first aid. It is an excellent opportunity for teachers to gain skills to better recognize mental health behaviour, respond when mental health crises arise, and guide the situation so the person can receive the appropriate supports.

I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to partake in this training. It has helped me recognize and provide support for my students and colleagues who are experiencing mental health issues. It has allowed me to be an advocate for the destigmatization of mental health issues in my school and assist students who are struggling with mental health issues. This training has been offered to school administrators and teachers in the past, based on specific requests from schools. Teachers can take this training online or in person. Discretionary

Professional Leave from your school district may be available for self-directed Professional Learning under Clause 18.05 of the Provincial Collective Agreement or Clause 29.04 of the Labrador West Collective Agreement, which is often linked to your professional growth plan.

You can reach out to the Mental Health Commission of Canada at <https://mhfa.ca> to access a variety of mental health first aid training programs.

*Amanda Gaulton (B.Ed., M.Ed.) is a Grade 6 teacher at Canon Richards Memorial Academy in Flowers Cove. Amanda is in her 19th year of teaching and has held various numeracy/literacy positions throughout her career.*



**Janice Genge (left) social worker with Labrador Grenfell Health and mental health first aid trainer and Amanda Gaulton, Grade 6 teacher, Canon Richards Memorial Academy.**

# OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

## SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS COUNCIL (SAC) AWARD WINNERS 2021-22

Each year the School Administrators Council (SAC) Provincial recognize award winners for Distinguished Principal and Vice Principal of the Year. The Canadian Association of Principals (CAP) also sponsor one student leadership award. The deadline for nominations each year is February 1. The winners for 2021-22 were celebrated virtually on October 13, 2022. The following represent some excerpts from the completed applications which clearly show why they were worthy of these designations.



### **Distinguished Principal of the Year: Janette Pomroy**

Everything about Ms. Pomroy exemplifies what it truly means to be a leader. She is kind, caring and compassionate. She will never turn away anyone, no matter how busy she is. Her open door policy is not only for her students, but also her staff. Each member of our staff feels that they

are valued and appreciated. She is never too busy to have a chat or offer advice.

Ms. Pomroy has also built very strong relationships with our family of schools. One example of the benefit of these connections was our fall food drive. We collaborated with schools in our family and promoted, challenged and worked together to ensure we were all successful. We've had colour days to promote the Junior High and High School colours. We've connected our students with the High School, via Google Meet, to learn about their student council. These connections help build our school community.

Ms. Pomroy is very talented with overseeing the school operations. She is outstanding in the role of Principal. She knows the financial system inside and out. She has a wonderful connection with our custodial and district staff. She has built a team to ensure our school is successful.



### **Distinguished Vice Principal of the Year: Carolyn Lethbridge**

Carolyn Lethbridge builds relationships with every person in our school community. Because she is visible and has a connection to every student, discipline problems are minimized and, when they occur, are dealt with directly, but positively and effectively. She achieves these connections

because she regularly offers to read aloud and do art and other SEL projects in classrooms. She greets students every morn-

ing in the hallway. She drops in on classrooms to connect, observe and encourage.

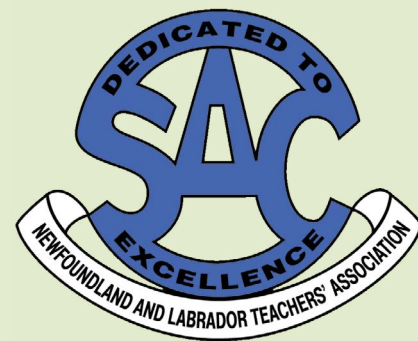
Carolyn is an active promoter of collegial circles and the sharing of best practices within the school. She is keen to put teachers in the spotlight for these sessions. Carolyn has a bottom-up approach to PL which has a positive impact on teacher attitudes and their willingness to actively and fully participate in new learning. She has also emphasized teacher wellness as a key component of work-learning. Her focus on staff self-care has been incredibly important through the pandemic period and is very appreciated.

Carolyn has been a long-time facilitator for the Roots of Empathy program. Her Mission is to provide each learner and staff member with the support necessary for them to learn and grow together.



### **CAP Student Leadership Award: Samantha Morgan**

This year's recipient is Samantha Morgan, a graduate from Roncalli Central High in Avondale. Samantha's application presented her as an outstanding student leader who has overcome a lot of adversity. She was a very active student volunteer who offered students phenomenal tutoring services. She is currently pursuing a career in Engineering or Law.



# OF SPECIAL INTEREST...

## SIC PRESIDENT WINS NATIONAL AWARD



A Newfoundland and Labrador teacher has been nationally recognized for her extraordinary contributions to school libraries and teacher-librarianship. **Leigh Borden**, President of the NLTA Teacher Librarians of Newfoundland and Labrador Special Interest Council is one of the 2022 recipients of the **Angela Thacker Memorial Award**.

Through this award, Canadian School Libraries honoured Leigh's expertise and contributions to the field of school libraries, school library learning commons, and teacher-librarianship. They noted and applauded her contributions at the school, district, provincial and national level, including leadership in promoting

the critical role of libraries and teacher-librarians in supporting learning and well-being.

The Angela Thacker Memorial Award has been established in memory of Angela Thacker, teacher-librarian, library coordinator, and school library colleague, mentor, leader and advocate who served the Association for Teacher-Librarianship in Canada (ATLC) and the Canada School Library Association (CSLA) in many capacities. This award honours teacher-librarians who have made contributions to the profession through publications, productions or professional development activities that deal with topics relevant to teacher-librarianship and/or school library learning commons.

## SPECIAL INTEREST COUNCILS OF THE NLTA

### A Great Way to Get Involved in Your Association

Special Interest Councils are professional learning communities dedicated to life-long learning and the ongoing professional growth of NLTA members. Their mandate includes offering a range of professional development programs, including conferences, institutes, focus groups, teleconferences, and e-learning initiatives. Councils communicate with their membership using a variety of current technologies. As part of their mandate, the councils will respond to curriculum and program concerns, develop position papers on critical issues, work with government on curriculum development and advise the NLTA on matters of importance.

Currently there are 16 Special Interest Councils:

- Council of Special Services (COSS)
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing/Blind and Visually Impaired (DHH/BVI)
- English Language Arts (7-12)
- Gender and Sexual Diversity (GSDSIC)
- Health Education Council
- Math/Science Council (MSSIC)
- NL Music Educators' Association (NLMEA)
- NL Counsellors' and Psychologists' Association (NLCPA)
- Physical Education Council (PESIC)
- Psychologists in Education (PIE)
- School Administrators' Council (SAC)
- Second Language Council
- Small Schools Council
- Speech Language Pathologists (SLP)
- Teacher Librarians Newfoundland Labrador (TLNL)
- Technology in Education Council (TESIC)

Please make every effort to be an active member of special interest councils that are of interest to you. If you wish to become a member of one of the existing councils, you have only to contact the president of that council (go to the NLTA website for this information), and you will be sent the necessary membership information.



## 2023 BGM Deadlines

### January 12, 2023

Proposed changes, amendments or repeal of NLTA By-Laws to be actioned by Convention must be presented in writing to the NLTA.

### February 12, 2023

- Proposed By-Law changes must be sent to all branches
- All nominations for Provincial Executive for publication in the Convention issue of *The Bulletin* must be postmarked or hand delivered to the NLTA Office
- Names of elected delegates and alternates to Convention should be forwarded to the NLTA Office for printing in *The Bulletin*
- Resolutions to Convention must be received at the NLTA Office

### March 12, 2023

Mailing of Convention issue of *The Bulletin*

### April 12-14, 2023

Biennial General Meeting

### April 13, 2023

Final deadline for receipt of nominations for Provincial Executive

## Dates to Remember

### January 2023

- Jan 13 **District Deadline:** Educational Leave applications  
Jan 19 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications  
Jan 27-28 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting  
Jan 31 **Deadline:** Receipt of nominations for Barnes, Bancroft, Allan Bishop and Special Recognition Awards

### February 2023

- Feb 14 Janeway Day in the Schools  
Feb 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications

### March 2023

- Mar 1-2 NLTA Provincial Executive Meeting  
Mar 3-4 NLTA Joint Council Meeting  
Mar 13-17 Education Week  
Mar 16 **Deadline:** PD Fund applications  
Mar 31 **Deadline:** Centennial Study Award applications  
Mar 31 **Board Deadline:** Notice for retirement at end of school year

## NLTA CHRISTMAS HOURS



Please be advised that the NLTA building will be **CLOSED** from **December 23<sup>rd</sup> to January 2<sup>nd</sup>** (inclusive) to allow staff to enjoy the holiday season. The office will reopen on January 3, 2023.

# APPLYING FOR EDUCATIONAL LEAVE?

Applications for Educational Leave for the 2023-24 School Year are available on the NLTA website at [www.nlta.ca](http://www.nlta.ca)

Application is made to the District.  
District deadlines are as follows:

**NLESD:** January 13, 2023

**CSFP:** January 13, 2023



## Call for Nominations

### NLTA Awards 2022-23

Each year your Association honours several of its members with four prestigious awards:

**Bancroft Award**

**Barnes Award**

**Allan Bishop Award**

**Special Recognition Award**

If you feel that someone within your school qualifies for nomination for one of the awards for the 2022-23 school year, please contact your school representative who will forward the name and information on this person to your branch president or the appropriate special interest council president.

All nominations must be completed on the NLTA website at [www.nlta.ca](http://www.nlta.ca) and must be submitted by January 31st in order to be considered.